

RETIREE

news&views

A PUBLICATION OF LOCAL 237 RETIREE DIVISION

VOL. 25, NO. 4, JULY/AUGUST 2019



The Things We Did Last Summer

REMEMBERING THE SUMMER, ALL WINTER LONG

There's never been a shortage of ways to remember the summer. In 1946, when Jo Stafford belted out the list of "The Things We Did Last Summer" in a song by Sammy Cahn and Jule Styne, could there be any doubt that we'd "remember it all winter long?" Or how about: The Tempos, 1959, with their hit by Sid Wayne and Sherman Edwards which movingly warned:

"See you in September. See you when the summer's through...Have a good time but remember, there is danger in the summer moon above." And more recently, the 1997 scary movie, directed by John Gillespie (based on a novel written in 1973 by Lois Duncan): "I Know What You Did Last Summer". Then there were the first day back grade school assignments: Write an essay entitled:

"What I did this past summer" (How many of us felt the need to make stuff up just to compete with the kids who seemed to do more exciting things than play ball, work in pop's store or just hang out on the stoop?) This summer, Local 237's retirees and the Retiree Division participated in many projects that will surely "last all winter long." ■

"Roads to Success" Summer Youth Employment Program

From July 8, 2019 until August 16, 2019, there were 9 high school or college interns, ranging in age from 16 – 21, who participated in Roads to Success (Summer Youth Employment Program) at Teamsters Local 237. This program is dedicated to helping young people discover the self-esteem, self-reliance and empathy necessary to become future leaders and driving forces of positive change. Local 237, by participating in SYEP, helped to enhance the students' real world knowledge by teaching them about unions, including their importance and history. Each intern was assigned a mentor to provide guidance on their future career goals. At the end of each work day, students met union staff to discuss what they've learned during the course of the day, and to give feedback on how we can continue to enrich their time with Local 237. On behalf of the Retiree Division, **Julie Kobi**, the Division's Assistant Director, worked closely with Local 237's Education and Training Division to devise curriculum and weekly assignments that included resume writing and job interview preparedness. As Julie noted: "It was a wonderful experience all around. We are very proud of the outcome." ■

See page 5 for Internet Tips and Tricks by intern Himel Uddin.



Students with Local 237 program supervisory staff: (left) Julie Kobi, Assistant Director, Retiree Division; Bertha Aiken, Director of Education and Training Division; (right) Shanell Grayson, Deputy Director, Education and Training Division, and President Gregory Floyd.



Students with President Gregory Floyd (left) and Local 237 staff.

Planning for Veteran's Day

Veteran's Day may be months away, but the Veteran's Committee of the Retiree Division is already hard at work to plan a program to mark the occasion. On August 13, a brainstorming session was held to discuss ideas on this year's tribute to veterans. Many ideas were exchanged and more meetings were planned to shore up a program that honors our men and women in the Armed Forces and the remarkable number of Local 237 retirees who served their country with valor and distinction. ■



Members of the Veteran's Committee attending the meeting: Angel Sanchez, Rocco Brienza, Antony Cottone, Betty Willis-Harris, Amadeo Torelli and Julie Kobi, Assistant Director, Retiree Division.



Members of the Veteran's Committee not in picture — Wifredo Velez (l) and Richard Fischetti (r).

Viva Puerto Rico!

Kicking off the summer season was the Puerto Rican Day Parade on June 9. Retirees and members of the Retiree Division staff joined hundreds of Local 237 members to march along Fifth Avenue from 44 Street to 79 Street. While the annual event is always exciting — marked by fabulous floats and music with colorfully dressed dancers — it is also a parade of pride in which the culture, history, contributions and resilience of Puerto Ricans are on display and applauded. With their presence, Local 237 retirees — those living locally as well as those who retired to Puerto Rico and came back to New York for the parade — underscored a devotion to their heritage and desire to share it with the entire City. ■



Retirees and members of the Retiree Division Staff.



Susan Milisits, Deputy Director of the Retiree Division with Nancy True, its Director.



by Gregory Floyd

President, Teamsters Local 237
and Vice President-at-Large on the
General Board of the International
Brotherhood of Teamsters

Here's a sad but true fact: Labor unions in America are weaker than in other industrialized nations. Today, in America, just 10.5% of all workers are in a union, and in the private sector, only one in 16 workers are in a union. This is largely because corporations have become very skilled and aggressive at fighting unionization. The negative consequences are enormous. They are evident in countless ways, from diminished workers' rights to the diminished political power of labor unions. For example, of the three dozen industrialized countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United States has the lowest minimum wage as a percentage of the median wage at just 34% of the typical wage compared with 62% in France and 54% in Britain. We also have the second-highest percentage of low wage workers, behind Latvia, which is number one. As far as policy power, all of the country's labor unions combined spend about \$48 million a year lobbying in Washington, while America's corporations spend approximately \$3 billion annually. There is no question that America's workers are losing out in their political influence and, most importantly, their pocketbooks. It's no wonder that a recent M.I.T. study found that 46% of nonunion workers say they would like to be in a union. Clearly, opportunity does exist to expand union membership—an opening that many nonunion groups are keenly aware of. However, the action of some are counter-productive. For example, the New York City branch of the Democratic Socialists of America

a message from the president

NOW IS THE TIME

(DSA) has expressed dissatisfaction with unions as not being aggressive enough on worker issues and presented its members with a plan to gain entry into six of our most powerful unions to organize members to become their own. Vincent Alvarez, President of NYC Central Labor Council, said it best: "It makes no sense that at a time when solidarity is needed to fight for real gains in economic opportunity and social justice for working families that the DSA would sow the seeds of disunity by targeting some of the most progressive unions in our city with plans for infiltration and disruption."

Now is the time for unions to get back to basics.

Even though Ralph Chaplin wrote the song "Solidarity Forever" in 1915 for the Industrial Workers of World War I, its refrain is as relevant and important today as it was more than 100 years ago: "When the union's inspiration thru the worker's blood shall run, there can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun, yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one, but the union makes us strong. Solidarity forever, solidarity forever, solidarity forever, for the union makes us strong." We must also keep in mind the words of other great advocates of labor unions, like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., President John F. Kennedy and even the Republican President, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Dr. King told us that "The labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standard of millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production. Those who attack labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers them." President Kennedy said: "Our labor unions are not narrow, self-seeking groups. They have raised wages, shortened hours and provided supplemental benefits. Through collective bargaining and grievance procedures, they have brought justice and democracy to the shop floor." President Eisenhower said that America was better off because of unions and that "Only a fool would try to deprive working men and women of the right to join the union of their choice."

Now is the time for unions to fight back.

The Labor Day parade along Fifth Avenue is great, but in this political climate, parades are not enough. We can't let union membership become an endangered species. Unlike pandas or dolphins, union members still have opportunity and resources to fight back. Labor leaders in New York have made it crystal clear to our elected officials and candidates that unions built the middle class in America. We just want to make sure that there will be a place in it for our own children. You can't fault us for that! And, we need to use every opportunity to remind them that labor still has a powerful voice and millions of votes. That always seems to get their attention. And one more thing: In New York, there is a sense that whether you're in a public or private union it doesn't matter, we're all in the same family. An assault on one is an assault on all of us. That same spirit was seen during the push to convene a Constitutional Convention. It would have had a devastating effect on public sector pensions and other benefits the Constitution guaranteed. But the proposal was overwhelmingly defeated because all unions got together to defeat it. We also sought and received the help of non-union groups who saw the push to lessen the role of labor unions for what it really was: An attack on democracy perpetrated by the special interests of the well-funded corporate 1%.

The labor movement needs to approach future challenges, like the upcoming Census, with the same unity and fervor. We also need to fight our fights for our own on our own. That does not mean we shouldn't seek allies. But simply: there is no substitute for labor unions. Sometimes we forget that. Some never knew that or ignored the fact. But history reaffirms: The 40-hour work week, health benefits, \$15 an hour minimum pay, paid vacation and family leave are just some of our hard-fought-and won--battles.

Now is the time to understand that unions ARE aggressive. Unions ARE progressive. Our history proves it. Our history didn't begin today. And, for tomorrow, now is the time to act. ■



by Nancy B. True
Director of the
Retiree Division

Labor Day 2019 – Let's March!

RETIREE news & views

Retiree News & Views (USPS 013028) is published Bi-Monthly by the Retiree Division of Local 237, International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Periodicals Postage is paid at New York, NY. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Retiree News & Views at 216 West 14th Street, New York, NY 10011-7296. 212-807-0555, retirees@local237.org, www.local237.org

GREGORY FLOYD
President

JEANETTE I. TAVERAS
Recording Secretary

RUBEN TORRES
Vice President

NANCY B. TRUE
Managing Editor

EDMUND KANE
Secretary-Treasurer

PHYLLIS SHAFRAN
Editor

On Saturday, September 7th, Local 237 members and retirees will be joining a vast contingent of workers – celebrating Labor Day – by marching down Fifth Avenue. For many years now, the NYC Labor Movement has celebrated Labor Day on the Saturday following the Monday holiday to ensure that workers can enjoy their final long weekend of summer and to maximize the participation of union members in the parade.

Labor Day was first celebrated in New York City on September 5, 1882 and was planned by the Central Labor Union. It was dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. In our current political climate, the parade is not only a celebration but also a statement about the im-

portance of unionized workers and their contributions to the well-being of our country. American workers, unionized or not, have the labor movement to thank for the five day work week, child labor laws and minimum wages amongst other protections.

As Local 237 retirees know, union membership ensured a dignified work life and entrance into the middle class. In retirement, union membership provides for a secure retirement with pensions and health insurance coverage. Or, as we like to say at Local 237 "Retired from Work, Not from the union!"

On September 7th, let's see if we can have a record-breaking number of retired members marching with pride down the center of Fifth Avenue. Join us! ■



Donaldo Castellar Cortina, un colombiano en Nueva York [4 de junio de 2019]

Por Néstor Murray-Irizarry
historiador y gestor cultural



Néstor Murray-Irizarry
Photo by George Malave



Donaldo Castellar Cortina

Tiene 79 años de edad y nació el 18 de febrero de 1940 en Cartagena, Colombia. Hijo de Donaldo Castellar, ganadero y agricultor y de Berta Cortina, ama de casa. Él es el mayor de doce hijos. Tiene dos nietos: Cristian Antonio de once años de edad y Aurelia María de siete años de edad.

Llegó a Nueva York el 4 de Julio de 1973. En Cartagena visitó el Consulado de los EE.UU. y allí lo entrevistaron y le explicó al funcionario que le atendió, sus aspiraciones y deseos de viajar a la *Ciudad de los Rascacielos* y le dieron el permiso oficial para venir a Nueva York. Llegó con \$200 dólares en el bolsillo. Cuando viajó por primera vez estaba solo ya que le dijo a su novia que probaría y si le iba bien la iría a buscar. Tuvo dos trabajos.

“Cuando terminé mi bachillerato (high school) y dos años de Química en Cartagena, en 1963, me di cuenta que éramos muchos dependientes de mis padres y decidí venir a Nueva York. Además, otros familiares que viajaron antes que yo a Nueva York habían hecho un pequeño capital. Yo trabajaba en Colombia en una compañía de petróleo, pero lo que ganaba no me daba para comprar un terrenito. Hice un curso para maestro, bachiller institucional. Como maestro me pagaban cada tres o cuatro meses.”

Llegó a Queens y lo ayudaron a conseguir un trabajo en 1970. Dos años y medio trabajó allí; junto la *plata* necesaria para casarse y traerse a su esposa en 1973:

“Un amigo mío Mario Fernández, me alquiló un piso en Queens. En su país la autorizaron a su esposa a viajar a Nueva York”. Nació su primer hijo. Al lado de donde ellos vivían había una escuela y allí le dieron trabajo a Donaldo. Allí estuvo 10 años.

Entró a trabajar con la ciudad de Nueva York en 1984 en *Housing* como *civil service* y luego como *building custodian* y a la vez se incorporó a la Unión 237 a la edad de 44 años.

Anteriormente trabajó desde 1974 hasta 1984 en una escuela como *building custodian* en el barrio Jamaica. Jean A. Soliman: le enseñó sobre el trabajo que tuvo que desempeñar en la de escuela y lo motivó a que siguiera estudiando y sugirió que buscara la forma de adquirir la ciudadanía de los EE.UU. y que siguiera superándose.

Viajó a Nueva York para estudiar y progresar. Donaldo comentó que cuando alguien llega a un país el día cuando se celebra su independencia, se queda en el país. Aquí se quedó, se casó e hizo una familia: dos hijos, una mujer y un varón, ambos estudiaron y están trabajando.

Primero tomó y pasó un examen y logró llegar a *General Service*; lo nombraron en tres lugares distintos en *Housing*, compitiendo con 500 personas que interesaban esas tres plazas. El último trabajo fue en Queens. Comenzó ganando cinco dólares la hora y terminó ganando \$18 dólares la hora. Trabajó 24 años y medio con la ciudad de Nueva York y con la Local 237.

Donaldo continúa comentando sus experiencias en sus trabajos:

¿Qué hacías en el trabajo?

“En 1984 pasé a trabajar para la ciudad, yo daba servicios a varios edificios. Yo era jefe de mantenimiento. Trabajaba con una secretaria que cogía las órdenes, para los electricistas, plomeros, etc. ahí estuve veinte años.”

“Yo vivía en Queens y trabajaba en Manhattan. Me levantaba a las 4 de la mañana cogía el tren y esperaba un bus. Llegaba a las 6:00 am. Entraba a las 6:30 am hasta las 2:30 pm.”

“Llegaba antes que todo el mundo, los demás llegaban a las 7:00 am. Yo organizaba las tareas para asignarlas a los empleados, a veces yo ayudaba cuando se necesitaba. Salía del trabajo y regresaba a casa, tenía que descansar temprano. Mi esposa se quedó a cuidar los dos hijos.”

“Yo escogí ese empleo y la Local 237 porque tenían una posición abierta en base a mis conocimientos y experiencia adquiridos.”

“Tuve también un compañero que me ayudó mucho, trabajamos juntos y compartimos mucho. Él está ahora en la Florida.”

“El hijo de Donaldo ahora trabaja para la ciudad de Nueva York, ha tenido ascensos en tecnología y entrenamiento para los *civiles service* en el Departamento de Educación. Su hija Diana terminó finanzas y trabaja en el banco Santander.”

¿Alguna vez la Unión tuvo que ayudarlo?

“Directamente no, pero muchos compañeros no tenían civil service y querían sacarme de mi puesto. La Local 237 me ayudó a que yo me quedara en mi puesto. Me ayudaron también con el alquiler, dos veces me quisieron sacar de mi apartamento.”

¿Cuándo se jubiló?

“El 2 de agosto del 2007. Me jubilé hace 12 años.”

¿Qué significa para usted ser miembro de un sindicato?

“Significa protección.”

¿Qué hace usted en su jubilación?

“Enseñé a los nietos pequeños hasta los tres años, que los pusieron en la escuela. Nos reunimos con la Unión y en la iglesia en Queens. Ayudamos a los emigrantes cuando tienen algún problema con sus documentos oficiales. de inmigración. Los que están pasando por problemas lo orientamos y los ayudamos en lo que podemos.”

¿Qué piensa usted de la Unión 237?

“Siento mucho agradecimiento a la Local 237. Porque con la ayuda de la Unión me casé; mis hijos se graduaron de universidad y estaban protegidos con servicios médicos hasta que cumplieron 21 años. Y ahora retirado sigo recibiendo, junto con mi esposa, esos maravillosos servicios. Pertenecemos aún a la local 237.”

“Porque con la Unión tuve protección, oportunidad de progreso, por sus cursos básicos y sus enseñanzas me protegieron de rentas abusivas. Varias veces me querían quitar el apartamento y los abogados me ayudaron. Igualmente he tenido la protección de toda mi familia con seguros médicos, dentales y medicinas hasta la fecha. Me jubilé del trabajo, pero no de la Local 237.”

Gracias por el tiempo dedicado a esta la entrevista. ■

Retired Local 237 Steward Appointed to NYCHA Board

On June 26th, Mayor de Blasio appointed Joseph K. Adams, Sr. to the NYCHA Board of Directors. Adams is the first 237 member or retiree to serve on the board!

The NYCHA Board is comprised of seven members appointed by the Mayor, including three members who are current residents of public housing and have a direct say in NYCHA's operations. Board members' duties include voting on contracts, resolutions, policies, motions, rules and regulations that affect all NYCHA residents.

Adams is exceptionally well qualified. He served for many years as a Local 237 Shop Steward and Grievance Representative and has been a NYCHA resident for more than 20 years. His practical experience will be a great asset to NYCHA as the board tackles unprecedented challenges.

Joseph K. Adams, Sr. currently resides at

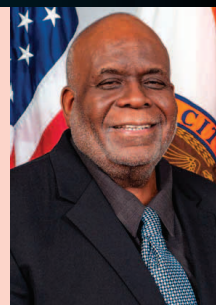
Manhattan's Sondra Thomas Apartments. He is a former resident of Manhattan's Woodrow Wilson Houses and the Bronx's Patterson Houses. Adams' extensive experience in advocating on behalf of the community is reflected through the jobs he's held and his volunteer work over the past few decades. He is a member of New York Communities for Change, was Vice President of John Jay College's Able Forces Club (which advocates for students with disabilities). And a School Safety Agent for over 15 years, he later worked at his alma mater, CUNY's John Jay College of Criminal Justice, as a Research Assistant for a professor in the Department of Africana Studies and as a Research Coordinator in the Women's Center Department of Counseling.

While overcoming a learning disability, Adams obtained his High School Equivalency Diploma. He later earned his bachelor's degree

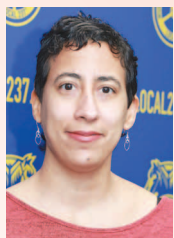
and Master of Public Administration degree from John Jay College. Adams received certification in public advocacy and leadership from the Joint Public Affairs Committee's Institute for Senior Action.

He raised four of his six children as a single parent while living in public housing, and was proud to see them graduate from elite high schools and universities, including Harvard University and the University of Chicago.

The entire Local 237 family applauds his nomination to the NYCHA Board of Directors and wishes him and the entire board success in improving and preserving our city's public housing. ■



Joseph K. Adams, Sr.



Older Adults and Depression

Julie Kobi, LMSW

Assistant Director
Teamsters Local 237 Retiree Division

Depression can happen at any age. Older adults, however, may be experiencing multiple life changes including the death of loved ones, stressful life events, retirement or a chronic medical conditions. It is normal to feel stressed and sad about life changing events. You are not alone. According to the National Institute of Mental Health an estimated 17.3 million adults in the United States have had at least one major depressive episode in their life time. Depression is a medical condition that can be treated with the help of your medical provider. Speaking to your medical provider can help determine the right treatment plan that works best for you. Treatment plans may include medication management and counseling services. Studies have shown that patients who engage in counseling services and take medication at the same time can improve depression symptoms. Just like having the flu or any other medical problem, seeing the doctor is the first step to helping you feel better. The same is true for depression.

SIGNS OF DEPRESSION

Depression can interfere with your day to day activities. Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much, loss of pleasure in doing things that you once liked to do, changes in your appetite - overeating or loss in appetite - may be signals to ask for help. Asking for help can be a difficult task when dealing with sensitive matters. It's OK to ask for help in a stressful time. When discussing depression with your doctor he or she may ask you to complete a form called the Patient Health Questionnaire (PH-Q-9). This questionnaire will ask you how you feel over the course of two weeks. Here are a few of the questions on the form:

- Do you feel very tired, helpless, and hopeless?
- Have you lost interest and pleasure in doing things previously enjoyed?
- Trouble sleeping or staying asleep?
- Loss of appetite or over eating?

If you answered yes to any of the questions you may be experiencing depression. Having worked in a hospital setting I have seen that depression in older adults can be missed at times because depression has some physical symptoms including decreased energy, fatigue, changed appetite and/or unintended weight changes very similar to other medical conditions. This is why speaking to your medical provider is very important. The good news is that, in most cases, depression is treatable in older adults. The right treatment plan may help improve your overall health and quality of life. Your medical provider can help with the process.

IS IT GRIEF OR DEPRESSION?

Experiencing grief after the loss of a loved one is a normal reaction to loss and generally does not require treatment. However, grief that lasts a very long time may require treatment.

HOW DO I GET HELP?

If you think that you or a loved one may have depression, it is important to seek treatment. A person with depression is unable to simply "snap out of it or shake it off". Depression is a medical condition that can impact your quality of life. Speak to your doctor or someone that you trust who can help in the process. You may find support from a loved one or friend during this time.

WHAT ARE MY TREATMENT OPTIONS?

The primary treatment options for depression include medication and counseling services. Your medical providers and therapists develop a personalized treatment plan. Communication with your doctor on how you are feeling while on medication is very important as there are many types of medication used to treat depression. Information from you can help the doctor develop the right treatment combinations for you.

Depression is a sensitive topic and can be difficult to talk about. The Retiree Division is here to help. Below is mental health guide for clinics that specifically help with mental health services. If you have any questions please feel free to call the Retiree Division at 212-807-0555.

For more information regarding this article and depression Please visit the website <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/depression-and-older-adults>

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Service Program for Older people

(212) 787-7120
302 West 91 Street, New York, NY 10024
info@spop.org

New York City Wellness

1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355)
<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/depression.page>

Puerto Rican Family Institute

212-924-6320
145 West 15th Street NY, NY 10011

The Institute for Family Health

(212) 206-5200
230 West 17th Street (bet. 7th & 8th Ave)
<https://www.institute.org/>

Mount Sinai St. Luke's

212-280-0100
411 W, 114th Street, 4th fl. NY, NY 10025

For Emblem Health/HIP members only

<https://www.emblemhealth.com/Members/Behavioral-Health-and-Substance-Use>

Metropolitan Hospital/

Outpatient Behavioral Health

212-423-6634, 212-423-6645
or 212-423-7237
1901 First Avenue (at 97th Street)
New York, NY 10029

(Home Bound Elderly members only)

Integrity Senior Service

1-800-277-4680
info@integrityseniorservices.com

VNS Pearls Program

718-888-6884



In Search for Housing?

by Luz Carty, MPA

Assistant to the Director, Retiree Division

Trying to find an apartment is a complicated, time consuming, and sometimes "nerve wrecking" process. The Retiree Division can help with information.

First of all, there are different types of housing options for seniors. **Affordable housing** options usually require an application, an interview, income and age verifications (and lots of patience). Applications are drawn by lottery, and many applicants end up on waiting lists. The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the New York City Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD), the New York City Housing Development Corporation (HDC) offer listings and applications. Each agency will have different income requirement guidelines, family size criteria and application process.

Supportive housing is permanent affordable housing with on-site support services for housing for low income or formerly homeless individuals. These tenants may be disabled, or have chronic health issues. Supportive housing is operated by community organizations.

The **Home Sharing Program** is offered by the New York Foundation for Senior Citizens. It offers a free service to match up individuals that have extra space in their homes (hosts) with responsible, compatible tenants (guests), "The program aims to create living arrangements that enhance the participants financial and/or their social well-being, promote companionship and relieve feelings of isolation. This program is for adults 18 and older and at least 1 must be age 60 or older. Another resource for home sharing is the Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults (JSPOA)

Assisted living programs are also another option. This is an option for individuals who are independent but may need assistance with daily living activities. Each facility offers different services which can include medical management, laundry, meals, social activities, transportation arrangements and more. These facilities can be costly, and it's important to be certain they meet your specific needs.

Retirement communities are for retirees who are independent and want to live amongst other retirees. There are no social services offered but some offer home aides or nurses. Most communities offer social activities and this may be the highlight of their programs.

Here are some ways to begin your search for housing.

Real Estate Brokers are one of the most common ways of finding an apartment in New York City. They usually have knowledge of the neighborhoods, and have web sites you can view the apartments with descriptions. Real estate brokers usually charge a fee for finding you an apartment.

If you prefer not to pay a fee, you can talk to friends, relatives, and co-workers. If you're looking for an apartment, make sure everyone you know knows that you're looking.

Classified Ads in local newspapers are also a good way to find available apartments. Try looking in the Daily News, El Diario, Amsterdam News, and local community papers.

You can also put on your walking shoes and walk around the neighborhoods. Look for "For Rent" signs.

Sometimes, asking other tenants or the management of your current building may lead to **finding a vacant apartment in same building**. Be proactive and talk to neighbors, doormen, supers, landlords, and/or your management company to see if another apartment is available in the same building. You may occasionally find housing through local government offices or community groups that keep information on neighborhood housing notices.

Finally, many community organizations offer "housing ambassador" programs. Housing ambassador programs may provide services that include rental assistance, education, affordable housing case management, and financial counseling. ■

RESOURCES FOR HOUSING AMBASSADOR PROGRAMS

BronxWorks: 929-252-7110, 630 Jackson Avenue, 1st fl, Bronx, NY 10455

University Neighborhood Housing Program

2715 Bainbridge Ave., Bronx, NY 10458

(718) 933-2539 NO WALK INS

Affordable Housing Lottery Helpline:

(212) 863-7990

Bklyn. Comm. Services/Astella Development Corp. 1702 Mermaid Ave.,

Brooklyn, NY 11224 (347) 292-3060

Flatbush Development Corporation (FDC)

1616 Newkirk Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11226

(718) 859-3800

116th Street Block Association, Inc.

55 East 115th St, New York, NY 10029

(212) 860-4100

The Actors Fund

729 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10019

(212) 221-7300

Bangladeshi American Community Development and Youth Services (BACDYS)

83-10 Rockaway Blvd., Ozone Park, NY 11416

(718) 235-1700

Neighborhood Housing Services of Queens CDC, Inc.,

60-20 Woodside Ave., 2nd fl., Flushing, NY 11377

(718) 457-1017

Resources for Supportive Housing:

Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development

www.nyc.gov/hpd

Corporation for Supportive Housing

61 Broadway, New York, NY 10006

www.csh.org (212) 986-2966

Supportive Housing Network of New York

247 West 37th St., 18 fl., NY, NY 10018

www.shnny.org (646) 619-9640

Resources for Home Sharing:

New York Foundation for Senior Citizens

11 Park Place, 14th Fl., New York, NY 10007

www.nyfsc.org (212) 962-7559

Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults

92-47 65th Street, Jamaica, New York 11433

718-657-6500

JASA Housing Program

Housing@jasa.org (212) 273-5200



Retiree Legal Fee Reimbursement Benefit

by **Mary E. Sheridan, Esq.**
Director of Local 237
Legal Services Plan

Did you know that you still receive your Legal Services benefit after you retire? Not only do you have the same right to representation as when you were working, you receive an added benefit. Should you reside outside of the 11 New York State covered counties and need a lawyer for a matter covered by the Legal Services benefit, you may be entitled to a reimbursement toward some of your private attorney fees.

If you live in one of the covered New York State counties, then you still have a Legal Services Plan attorney available to you for a wide range of civil matters. These matters include domestic relations (Family Court proceedings, divorce and separation), purchase and sale of primary residences (co-op, condo, 1 and 2 Family homes), wills, powers of attorney, health care proxies, some private adoptions, credit and consumer problems, tenant rights and bankruptcies. Representation can include consultation, legal research, drafting of documents and pleadings, negotiation and trial work. A lawyer is provided to you at no cost.

But, if you leave the covered area after retirement and have a legal matter described above, you may receive a portion of those fees back. For instance, if you buy a primary residence in Florida, you would hire a Florida real estate attorney. After the transaction is complete and your private attorney paid, you can submit the claim form and receive a check toward the attorney fees spent. Please remember to call your Legal Services Plan for information on possible reimbursement for your outside attorney fees. We can be reached at (212) 924-1220. ■



Expanded Dental Benefit for Florida and Puerto Rico Retirees

by **Mitch Goldberg**
Director of the Retiree Benefit Fund

On July 1, 2018 The Board of Trustees of the Teamsters Local 237 Retirees' Benefit Fund announced the expansion of the dental network for retired members residing in Florida and Puerto Rico. Effective July 1, 2018, retirees residing in Florida and Puerto Rico have access to Healthplex's National Panel. The lack of participating providers outside of the New York Metro area made it impossible for retirees in Puerto Rico and Florida to receive In-Network services. The Fund's goal is to help retirees avoid out of pocket expenses when seeking dental treatment. Access to the national panel ensures that retirees in Puerto Rico and Florida will have access to participating providers. When a retired member from Florida or Puerto Rico travels to the New York metro area, the existing Metro Panel will continue to be the participating network.

One year after implementing the Healthplex National Panel we are still receiving letters and calls from retired members who say they can't find an In-Network provider. In an effort to ensure that retirees in Florida and Puerto Rico can access the National Healthplex Panel we are providing the following information:

To locate a participating provider in Puerto Rico and Florida, visit the Healthplex website at www.healthplex.com. At the top of the page choose *Find a provider*, or enter the group number from the Healthplex card that was mailed

to you. Next choose PPO/EPO panels. Once you see the list, choose Careington PPO Panel (The National Network). Complete the 2 and 3 fields, type of provider and where you live to locate providers in your area. If you don't have access to a computer you can always call Healthplex Customer Service at 1-800-468-0600.

As always, be sure to bring your Healthplex identification card with you when you visit the dentist. You may also receive treatment from non-participating dentists and you will be reimbursed according to the existing fee schedule. However, out-of-network dentists may charge higher fees and your out-of-pocket expenses will, in most cases, be more than those of a participating provider.

The success and utilization of the national network in Florida and Puerto Rico is key to adopting the network for all of our retirees who reside outside the NY Metro area. Hopefully, in the not too distant future, we may be able to provide this network throughout the country.

The Healthplex Customer Service Department is available Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with any eligibility, claims or provider availability questions by calling 1-800-468-0600. You can also visit the Healthplex, Inc. website at www.healthplex.com to view your account. Of course, Retirees' Benefit Fund staff are always available to help. They may be reached during normal business hours at 212-924-7220. ■

"Roads to Success"— Summer Youth Employment Program

Himel Uddin, a student at Brooklyn Tech High School, entering his senior year, wrote about his experiences with "Roads to Success" and one of his projects with the Retiree Division.



Himel Uddin

Hey this is Himel, one of the intern's part of the Summer Youth Program working for Local 237. I always had a passion (and still have) for computers and technology in general, which is the reason why I decided to write an article discussing the tips and tricks when it comes to browsing the internet safely. I hope you guys take some things away from this article and thank you to Local 237 for this amazing opportunity.

The internet is ever-growing and as more and more people start to incorporate it into their daily lives, it can sometimes feel overwhelming to a new user. The internet itself is a great place; without the right guidance however, the internet can do more harm than good. There's all kind of people using the internet, from casual users like you and me to those who may not necessarily have the right intentions. Because of its size, people from all ages and backgrounds are susceptible to these attacks, however, children and older adults tend to

be targeted the most. Learning some essential tips and tricks on how to stay safe online will not only help you out in the long run, it will make your experience smoother in this digital world.

Something that we have been told when we were growing up is that you shouldn't talk to strangers. Social media allows us to connect with our friends and relatives in an instant, but it also allows us to connect with strangers. Interactions online tend to be safer than those in real life, but that doesn't mean they aren't dangerous. Don't give out your personal information to those who you don't know and be aware of what you post online. Many social media sites allow you to only show your content to those you know. If you are being harassed by a person or bothered by unwanted spam, you can always block that individual by the tools provided by the site itself. If you ever feel like your safety is in danger, let authorities know.

One way to protect your information is by using passwords. Most of the time, many of us use

the same password for all of our accounts. The reason why this is a terrible idea is that if one of your accounts ever gets hacked, the hacker can go through other accounts under your name. Always have a strong password, and if you ever have difficulties remembering them, write them down! One way to confirm that you are on a safe website is by looking at what the name of the website starts with. If you see HTTPS, it means that the website keeps your information safe. If you see HTTP (without the "s"), it means that the website doesn't encrypt your information and it just isn't as safe as its counterpart. Don't try to go shopping or banking on websites that start with just HTTP.

Practicing these tips and tricks will only encourage good behavior online, which will hopefully create a healthy relationship between your online and real life. With the right awareness, anybody can enjoy the internet while being safe at the same time! ■

Sources: <https://www.connectsafely.org/seniors/>

INTERNET TIPS AND TRICKS

by **Himel Uddin**

on a personal note...

Congratulations

Congratulations to retired Housing Manager and WWII Veteran **Irving Goldberg** as he celebrates his 100th birthday. We wish him all the best and many more!

Best Wishes

Best wishes and a speedy recovery to retired cook, **Kenneth Fox**.

Condolences...

Condolences to the family of **James Riley**. James worked for NYCHA for 34 years, ending with his retirement in 1986, when he was Director of Management and supervised all of the projects in The Bronx, Staten Island and Manhattan.



10 FACTS about NYCERS

1. Members + Beneficiaries - 376,609
2. Active Members - 224,364
3. Retirees + Beneficiaries - 152,245
4. Total Benefits Paid - \$4.9 billion
5. Average Retirement Benefit Paid (2017) - \$45,353
6. Number of Loans Issued - 48,478
7. Participating Employers - 10
8. Plans Administered - 62
9. New York City Pension Funds Combined - 5th Largest Pension System in the U.S. by Assets
10. New York City Pension Funds Combined - Largest Municipal Pension System in the U.S.

SOURCES:

^a 2018 NYCERS Comprehensive Annual Financial Report
* P&I Research Center, Sept. 30, 2017

Make Note

ORL (Office of Labor Relations) is in the process of moving. The new location will be
**22 Cortland Street,
12th Floor, Manhattan**
(Phone number remains the same)

RETIREE news & views

216 West 14th Street
New York, NY 10011



Affiliate of



PERIODICALS
POSTAGE
PAID AT
NEW YORK,
NY

JULY/AUGUST 2019

President Gregory Floyd, Director Nancy B. True and the Staff of the Retiree Division
**INVITE YOU TO JOIN YOUR UNION BROTHERS AND SISTERS
TO MARCH WITH PRIDE AND IN SOLIDARITY**



**LABOR DAY
PARADE**
SAT., SEPTEMBER 7, 2019



FREE SHIRTS AND REFRESHMENTS BRING YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS!
Kick-off is 12 Noon from W. 47th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues

**HOLD
--- THE ---
DATE!**

LATINO HERITAGE CELEBRATION

Hosted by Retiree Division's
El Comité Latino

**Friday, September 20, 2019
11am to 2pm**

Marguerite Feinstein Conference Room

HOLD THE DATE

ITALIAN HERITAGE CELEBRATION

Hosted by the Retiree Division's Italian Heritage Committee

Friday, October 18, 2019 • 11am to 2pm

Marguerite Feinstein Conference Room